

# FEVER, HOW TO REDUCE

Fever is the body's reaction to infection or inflammation. It is not a disease in itself, but rather a sign of a problem.

The normal temperature in children varies with activity, eating and the time of day, ranging from 99° F to 100.° F (37.2° to 37.8° C) rectally in healthy children. Rectal thermometers are the most accurate and are the preferred method of taking temperature in children under 10 years old. The thermometer has its line at 98.6° F (37° C), which is not the normal rectal temperature. Low-grade fever up to 101° F (38.3° C) probably should not be treated unless the cause of the fever can be identified.

## HOW TO REDUCE

You may sponge the child's body with warm water to reduce the fever temporarily. This is one common technique:

- Fill a basin with warm water.
- Remove all clothing and lay the child down on a towel.
- Dip a washcloth (preferably a new one that is still a little bit rough) into the warm water. Wring it out until it is damp but not soggy.
- Using the washcloth, begin massaging all over the body, covering as much surface as you can. The child should not be dripping wet, but should feel moist all over.
- Continue constant gentle massaging. This increases the flow of warm blood to the skin.
- When the washcloth begins to cool off, dip it into the warm water and wring it out again.
- Repeat massages. In 5 to 15 minutes, the child's temperature will probably be on its way down. Stop sponging when the temperature reaches 100° F (37.8° C).
- Don't use a fan, alcohol, ice or cold water, and don't use cold baths or leave your child covered with wet towels. Dress your child lightly (there is no need to bundle the child).

## DOSAGE SCHEDULE FOR USING ACETAMINOPHEN FOR FEVER-REDUCING

(give every 4 to 6 hours, but don't wake the child, if he/she is sleeping)

Average Age	Weight (lb)	Acetaminophen Drops	Acetaminophen Syrup
3 mo. or less	13 lb or less	0.3 cc	1/4 teaspoon
3 mo. to 1 yr	13 to 21 lb	0.6 cc	1/2 teaspoon
1 to 2 years	21 to 28 lb	0.9 cc	3/4 teaspoon
2 to 3 years	28 to 32 lb	1.2 cc	1 teaspoon
3 to 4 years	32 to 36 lb	2.4 cc	1-1/2 teaspoon
4 to 5 years	36 to 41 lb	2.4 cc	2 teaspoons

## FLUIDS

Fluids are the only important requirement in the diet of the child with fever. Provide water, weak tea, ginger ale, broth, nectar or liquid Jello. Some of the best-tolerated foods are saltines, cereal, applesauce, bananas and carrots. Offer food, but don't force it. Fluids in small, frequent doses are all that is important for the first few days.

## CALL OUR OFFICE IF

- Your child is under 6 months old and has a fever.
- Your child is 6 months to 3 years of age and has a fever of 102° F (38.8° C).
- The temperature in any child rises to 103° F (39.4° C) or above.
- The fever persists over 24 hours.
- There are any accompanying symptoms (unusual drowsiness, loss of mental alertness, labored breathing, or an appearance that disturbs or worries you.)